

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph beginning on page 13, line 3, with the following amended paragraph:

The posterior end ~~54~~ of the casing 31 has an aperture 58 which corresponds to the aperture 28 located on the lip 24 of the shell 21. The swivel joint 95 or other connector is accepted by both apertures 28, 58 alike and provides for the metacarpal unit 30 to move in a lateral fashion with respect to the hinge system 20. Specifically, the swivel joint 95 allows up to a 60° turn on each side of its horizontal axis providing for normal movement of the carpal region. In a preferred embodiment, the swivel joint 95, as well as the connectors 90 may comprise of quick release pins allowing for each addition or subtraction of either the base unit ~~46~~ 10, metacarpal unit 30 or other accessory or accessories adapted to fit thereto. The substantially rigid casing 31 is preferably positioned over the dorsal surface of the user's hand, and the substantially rigid shell 21 is similarly positioned over the top surface of the user's forearm, as shown in the figures. Further, in a preferred embodiment, the casing 31 and the shell 21 may be made of such materials as, but not limited to, moldable carbon fiber, epoxy matrix carbon fiber, Kevlar composite material, hard plastic or thermoplastic material which either being mass produced or having a more customized fit for an individual.